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Common Ground Publishing Corp.
204-4381 Fraser St.
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G4 Canada

100% owned and operated by Canadians.
Published 12 times a year in Canada.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40011171
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to
Circulation Dept. 204-4381 Fraser St.
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G4
ISSN No. 0824-0698

Copies printed: 72,000
Over 250,000 readers per issue
Survey shows 3 to 4 readers/copy
Plus online at www.commonground.ca

Annual subscription is $60 (US$50) for one year (12 issues). Single issues are $6 (specify issue #). Payable by cheque, Visa, MasterCard, Interac or money order.

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features

6 **GMO? It's Our Right to Know**
Joseph Roberts

8 **Osteoporosis healing or disease**
Allan Lawry

10 **Focus research on safety**
Alan Cassels

12 **Organic independence**
Phil Howard

16 **Health Canada OKs 10 nutrients**
Eldon Dahl

24 **Mantra music**
Alan di Perna

38 **Seva Canada turns 30**
Deanne Berman

Our cover photo this month was taken by photographer Jon Kaplan in the small agricultural village of Zunil, Guatemala. For more than a decade, Jon has donated his images to the Seva Foundation, a non-charitable organization whose mission is to restore sight and prevent blindness in the developing world. This month, Seva Canada turns 30 (see article pg 38). Visit Jon's website at www.jonkaplan.com

columns

CULTURE

26 In the beginning…
FILMS WORTH WATCHING
Robert Alstead

ENVIRONMENT

28 Cycling makes cities cool
SCIENCE MATTERS
David Suzuki

HEALTH

15 Your food allies
NUTRISPEAK
Vesanto Melina

ORGANICS

14 Put your kitchen on a diet
ON THE GARDEN PATH
Carolyn Herriot

SPIRITUALITY

22 Triggers
A NEW EARTH
Eckhart Tolle

25 Endings and beginnings
UNIVERSE WITHIN
Gwen Randall-Young

18 NEW FOR YOUR HEALTH
20 STAR WISE
29 RESOURCE DIRECTORY
35 LETTERS
36 DATEBOOK
37 CLASSIFIED

ethics in action awards
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Joseph Roberts

Is our food GMO?

It's Our Right to Know

There are two historical initiatives going on right now in America. In California, a campaign called "It's Our Right to Know" (www.labelgmos.org) is pressing to get a million signatures so that labelling of genetically modified foods is on the ballot for 2012. (The next US presidential election takes place November 6, 2012.)

A survey showed that more than 90 percent of Californians want the right to know what is in their food. People are taking back their power and putting initiatives on the ballot (as voters in BC did with their HST Referendum). The California Ballot Initiative requires 800,000 in-person, physical signatures. It cannot be done online and the deadline to gather the signatures is April 22, 2012.

Genetically modified organisms, often called genetically engineered (GE) or "transgenics" are derived from a process where genes of one species are inserted into another species.

"These genetically engineered foods have been allowed into our food supply without warning and they aren't labelled," says Pamm Larry, founder of the "It's Our Right to Know" campaign. "The bottom line is Californians have a right to know what's in the food we eat and feed our children. It's time to send a strong, direct message to those who govern us…that we want genetically engineered foods labelled."

On the US federal level, the campaign "Just Label It!" (www.justlabelit.org) has tremendous popular bi-partisan support. More than 500 partner organizations representing healthcare, consumer advocates, farmers, parents, environmentalists, food and farming organizations, businesses and faith-based communities have united on this issue.

So why is common sense GMO labelling not already in place? Because the biotech industry lobbies politicians for laws favourable to their industry. Corporations such as Monsanto are huge in the biotech industry. Biotech companies have been so effective in lobbying senators, governors, congressmen, regulators, medical panels and research organizations that they have basically rendered the government impotent in protecting citizens. Yet the biotech PR machines are performing far better than the actual crops. *Failure to Yield*, a report by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) notes that, despite 20 years of research and 13 years of commercialization, genetic engineering has failed to significantly increase US crop yields.

Three GE crops account for the vast majority of acres of GMOs planted around the world: corn, soybeans and cotton. Five countries produce 90 percent of the world's genetically engineered crops: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India and the US.

Even though 50 countries, including the European Union and Japan, have laws mandating that genetically engineered foods be labeled, sadly, Canada and the US do not. Remember, if it is GMO it is not organic and certainly not natural. Biotech corporations do not want to label GMOs because given a choice, informed people would not buy transgenic foods.

Locally, in Richmond, BC, Nature's Path has championed consumer education and promoted GMO labeling for many years. "If California gets GMO labeling, so will the rest of the USA, and Canada will follow," says founder Arran Stephens.

Although we live in Canada and cannot directly sign the petitions for these important initiatives in the US, we can help them succeed by calling or emailing people who do live there and by sending donations.

Make no mistake; if US citizens claim their right to know when GMOs are in their foods, Canada's government will not stand for long refusing to label.

You too have the right to know what you are feeding your family. Act now, spread the word and visit the websites cited in this article. Support those frontline campaigners who are passionately working for our right to know.

Like abolishing slavery, GMO labelling is just the right thing to do.

For more information about the anti-GMO movement in Canada, visit www.cban.ca (Canadian Biotechnology Action Network), www.cog.ca (Canadian Organic Growers) and www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca (Certified Organic Associations of BC).

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Allan Lawry

Osteoporosis

healing mechanism or disease?

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To understand how osteoporisis is a healing mechanism and not a disease, a brief history of the term "osteoporosis" is necessary. In 1830, French pathologist Jean Lobstein observed there were holes in the bones of some of the cadavers he was studying. And around that time, various researchers began to combine two Latin words to describe this condition: "*osteo*" meaning bone and "*poros*" meaning pore or hole. Together, the two words literally mean "porous bones," describing weak and fragile bone that could fracture. You basically had to break a bone before you were diagnosed with the "disease."

This changed in 1994 when the World Health Organization (WHO), under the direction of the UN, changed the description of osteoporosis from a disease of fractures to a disease of fracture "risks." The organization also published its guidelines for what comprised a risk fracture, based on T scores derived from DEXA X-ray scanners. These scanners began to show up in greater numbers in medical clinics all over North America and due to their abnormally low levels for determining risks, almost overnight, 30% of all Caucasian females had a "risk factor."

The WHO subsequently recommended bisphosphonates (drugs) as the first line of treatment for the disease; Fosamax was approved by the FDA and sales began to skyrocket. Last year, sales reached $3 billion dollars. These drugs not only have many well-documented adverse effects, but there is growing evidence they may actually cause bone to weaken after long-term (more than five years) use. This might be due to the drug's hardening of the bone, where it becomes more brittle and prone to breaking. There are warnings from the US FDA noting the bisphosphonates may cause other fractures, like those of the femur. (See http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm229171.htm)

The medical business, Big Pharma and the FDA have created a "disease" from a symptom. They endorse faulty diagnostics, promote a harmful cure and sell it to anyone who is taken in by their deceptions. They have created a nightmare for those caught in the web of deceit, drugs and false hope for healthier bones.

Basic bone information: Bones are living, active tissues that renew themselves via a process called remodelling. Hormonal cells called osteoclasts remove old bone from bone tissue, deposit it into the bloodstream for removal and create small holes in the process. Cells called osteoblasts then arrive with a "mortar" of calcium, minerals and collagen to fill in the holes. This is an ongoing process that peaks when we are in our twenties. It begins to slow down in our forties and can accelerate naturally as we age.

Osteoclasts and osteoblasts are activated by the parathyroid hormone (PTH), which signals osteoclasts to pull calcium *from* the bones. Calcitonin is the hormone that stimulates osteoblasts to deposit calcium *into* the bones. Osteoblasts *must* be able to do their job effectively. Osteoblasts that are exhausted are one of the primary reasons for bone loss. Problems begin when the delicate balance between PTH and calcitonin is disrupted.

Bone loss can occur when the process of remodelling becomes dysfunctional. It affects one in four women over the age of 45 and one in eight men over 50. Here are some of the main reasons why we lose bone and some natural solutions to these problems:

Lack of magnesium: Calcitonin relies on magnesium to function properly. When we lack it, the balance between calcitonin tilts too far toward PTH. This results in excessive stimulation of the osteoclasts, causing calcium to be pulled from the bones. Most people are low in magnesium. The recommended intake is 500-900mg/day.

Excessive acidity (acidosis): If your diet contains too many acid foods such as meat, grains, bread, pasta, soft drinks, alcohol and coffee and not enough alkalizing foods such as green vegetables and fruits, your body starts to become acidic. As the blood needs to be slightly alkaline (approximately 7.3-7.4 PH), your body will pull calcium from the bones to neutralize the acid.

This is one of the main reasons for "bone remodelling dysfunction" or BRD. BRD is the term I prefer to use to describe "porous bone." To keep your body in a more alkaline state, a diet that consists of 70-80% alkaline foods and 20-30% acid foods is recommended. You can check your PH levels with pH strips purchased at health food stores; you can monitor saliva or urine. It is recommended that your pH be approximately 6.5 in the morning, 7.0 in the afternoon and 7.5 in the evening. This shows you have alkaline reserves for the body's needs. We have seen bone density increase by over 20% with this strategy alone.

Low hormone levels: Bone requires an adequate supply of several hormones, such as parathyroid hormone, growth hormone, DHEA, calcitonin, estrogen in women and testosterone in men. As an example, cortisol is a stress hormone, produced when there is stress. It will pull calcium from the bones if there is not enough DHEA to counter balance its effect. The parathyroid regulates calcium in the body and if it becomes stressed will pull calcium from the bones. We have recorded a 10-pound bone loss due to the condition, which is known as hyperparathyroidism. Estrogen loss for females during menopause is another major factor, as estrogen protects the loss of calcium in the body.

Women should begin to check their hormone levels starting in their early forties. For men, begin to check in the early fifties. This will give you a baseline for future reference and from which to monitor changes. Contact your primary care physician to coordinate these vital tests.

Low intake of the essential nutrients and bone builders: Attempt to have a diet that contains 20-30% protein, 30-40% plant-based carbohydrates, 15-20% good fats and 10-15% fibre. Enjoy your food and give

yourself lots of good nutrition and energy.

Strong bones require the following: Bio-available calcium three times per day (800-1,000 mg/day); Natural sources of vitamin D (sunshine) (800-2,000 iu/day); Phosphorous (800-1,200mg/day; Potassium, (4,000-6,000mg/day). In addition, manganese, silicon, zinc, strontium and vitamin K are also important.

The bone robbers: Avoid smoking and an excess of coffee, alcohol, stress, calcium from dairy sources (increases acidosis), salt, sugar, soft drinks and fluoride. Also avoid prescription drugs, even those endorsed by Health Canada for "osteoporosis." Some drugs actually *contribute* to fractures by killing the osteoclasts. This creates old, brittle bone that is prone to fracture. Femoral fractures are on the rise worldwide due to this misguided treatment. (For more information, search Google for "Fosamax lawsuits.")

Not enough exercise: Exercise stimulates the osteoblasts to produce more bone. Just walking more will help and if you can do weight-bearing exercises, such as light weight training, you will help the bones greatly. Attempt to work out three times a week and vary your routine to avoid repetition, injury and boredom. Try to get outside and give yourself lots of fresh air and oxygen. You will feel better and more positive. You were meant to be active and to give your body the gift of lifelong activity. The main reason for BRD is due to the owner of those bones not providing the right ingredients for growth and maintenance of the overall body. If you do not provide your body with health enhancing nutrition, supplements, fresh air, exercise, sunshine and positive thoughts, your bone mineral supply may become depleted.

BRD is a short-term dysfunction that is actually a built-in healing and balancing system of the body. It gives priority to places or systems of the body that require minerals immediately. It "sacrifices" its minerals to these areas and then waits for its owner to replenish the storehouses. If the owner (you and I) does not provide the bones with what they need, the dysfunction continues and bones become weaker, less dense and more porous. Bones are the storehouses for energy for short-term repairs and balancing. They were not meant to provide long-term energy for the body. You, as its owner, must keep mineralization high in the bones to prevent the long-term results that we now define as BRD.

Bones are the storehouses for energy for short-term repairs and balancing. They were not meant to provide long-term energy for the body. You, as its owner, must keep mineralization high in the bones to prevent the long-term results that we now define as BRD (bone remodelling dysfunction).

For many years, the definition and promotion of BRD was based on the following concept: Osteoporosis is a disease that causes weak and fragile bones that are prone to breaking. Other research has prompted a new definition: Bones lose density and become weak or fragile due to bone remodelling dysfunction (BRD), a short-term healing mechanism. This is caused by a variety of metabolic processes that contribute either individually or collectively to the decline of bone integrity.

BRD can be reversible, but it requires knowledge, a healthy diet and exercise plan, hormonal balancing and stress reduction. Above all, however, it requires a dedicated owner to take responsibility for the health of their bones. The earlier you start the better, so take care of your bones.

Vancouver-based **Allan Lawry** is the creator of the "Healthy Bones Program," which provides an all-natural alternative for people with bone health concerns. He is also a lifestyle and fitness coach. Call 604-220-7188 or email info@alfitness.ca, www.alfitness.ca

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Briefing Notes on Prescription Drugs

Focus research on safety

Why is more money going towards drug discovery research than drug safety research? Because that's what the government of Canada is paying for. Today's fortune-tellers, horoscope writers and other modern soothsayers are very compelling figures. They are magnets for attention even though their predictions should be thought of as entertainment and not enlightenment. Yet some predictions do turn out to be right. Julius Caesar was murdered by a conspiring group of senators in Rome, but at least he was warned by his wife and a soothsayer who said the Ides of March – the 15th of the month – could be a very bad day indeed.

This year on the Ides of March, Canada's federal government chose to announce, with much fanfare, an investment of $150 million over the next five years for pharmaceutical research. The funding seems to be aimed primarily at drug researchers connected to drug companies – because you need matching funds to play in that pool – and at a mere $30 million per year over five years, this doesn't seem like that much. If, however, we step back from that announcement and gaze into a crystal ball, we can judge with some degree of certainty where the government's priorities may be taking us. In an era of restraint and worries about the fiscal health of the country, and with the Conservative's Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq plunking down a big wad of cash to help strengthen "Canada's position as a preferred location to conduct clinical research," you tend to pay attention. If you like the idea of Canadians doing clinical research and welcome Canadian patients being the research subjects, you'd welcome such an announcement.

If you have a debilitating disease like MS or Parkinson's, you might be glad that Canada's government is prioritizing pharmaceutical research and putting money towards researching products to help our citizens stay healthy. The announcement also noted the new investment will "accelerate the development of new clinical practices and health products, which will have a direct impact on treatment and services provided to patients."

I know many hardworking researchers who would salivate over even a small portion of the new $150 million, especially the relatively poor lot struggling away doing health services research, investigating drug safety questions or testing different ways to make physicians better aware of adverse drug warnings. But clearly this new funding is not about using the drugs we have more thoughtfully; it's about developing even more of them. I look into the crystal ball and wonder why it seems important to have drug research done in Canada. Does it matter if a new drug, a new computer program or a new car is designed, tested and built in Mumbai, Melbourne or Montreal? Arguments could be made either way, but the stark reality of globalization is that the global mega-corporations who develop any product nowadays – whether it's a mobile phone or an osteoporosis drug – are ruled by the laws of the marketplace and will get things done where it is cheapest.

So why would pharmaceutical companies want to develop and test their drugs in Canada if they could do so in Africa, India or China at a fraction of the price? That's a complex question, but we do know that federal tax incentives and research funding to sweeten the pot will, at least, buy some temporary loyalty. Developing drugs is all about determining effectiveness, learning if a new chemical entity will work in certain diseases and result in improved health outcomes. We absolutely need that kind of research and the drug industry and the Canadian government, including our Health Minister, would argue we need to fund the people and the infrastructure to keep high tech medical research in Canada. All part of the "knowledge economy" they'll say. Others would argue where a product is developed and tested is irrelevant because the global companies doing the developing will want to sell them wherever they find paying

customers. This leads me to conclude that, by necessity, we need more of the kind of research that can only be done here – applied research – which is about taking effective treatments and practices and maximizing their efficient use in a Canadian health system.

Archie Cochrane, a British researcher whose name now brands the internationally esteemed Cochrane Collaboration, one of the best sources of systematic health evidence in the world, wrote a book called *Effectiveness and Efficiency: Random Reflections on Health Services*. Over 40 years ago, he stressed that governments must actively determine a nation's research priorities and that "pure" research "can be done and is, in fact, done all over the world." He said that to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of a health service, governments needed to make considerable investments in applied research.

Applied research asks "real world" questions such as: does health service X or drug Y or diagnostic test Z produce health outcomes in our population that are worth the money we invest in them? And if not, what does produce those desired health outcomes?

One example of applied research could lead to safer and more effective use of pharmaceuticals. We have a Canadian research network called DSEN – the Drug Safety and Effectiveness Network – which was set up a few years ago and funded with $30 million over five years to study the real world safety and effectiveness of drugs. Research to discover rare side effects or adverse effects of drugs already on the market is intensive work that is relatively low-cost, but with potentially high impact. While the DSEN group is studying some vital questions, including the safety of statins (cholesterol-lowering drugs) and antipsychotics (drugs for schizophrenia, but also widely used in the elderly), will it be enough to make much of a dent in the way drugs are used in this country? The crystal ball says no.

> This new funding is not about using the drugs we have more thoughtfully; it's about developing even more of them.

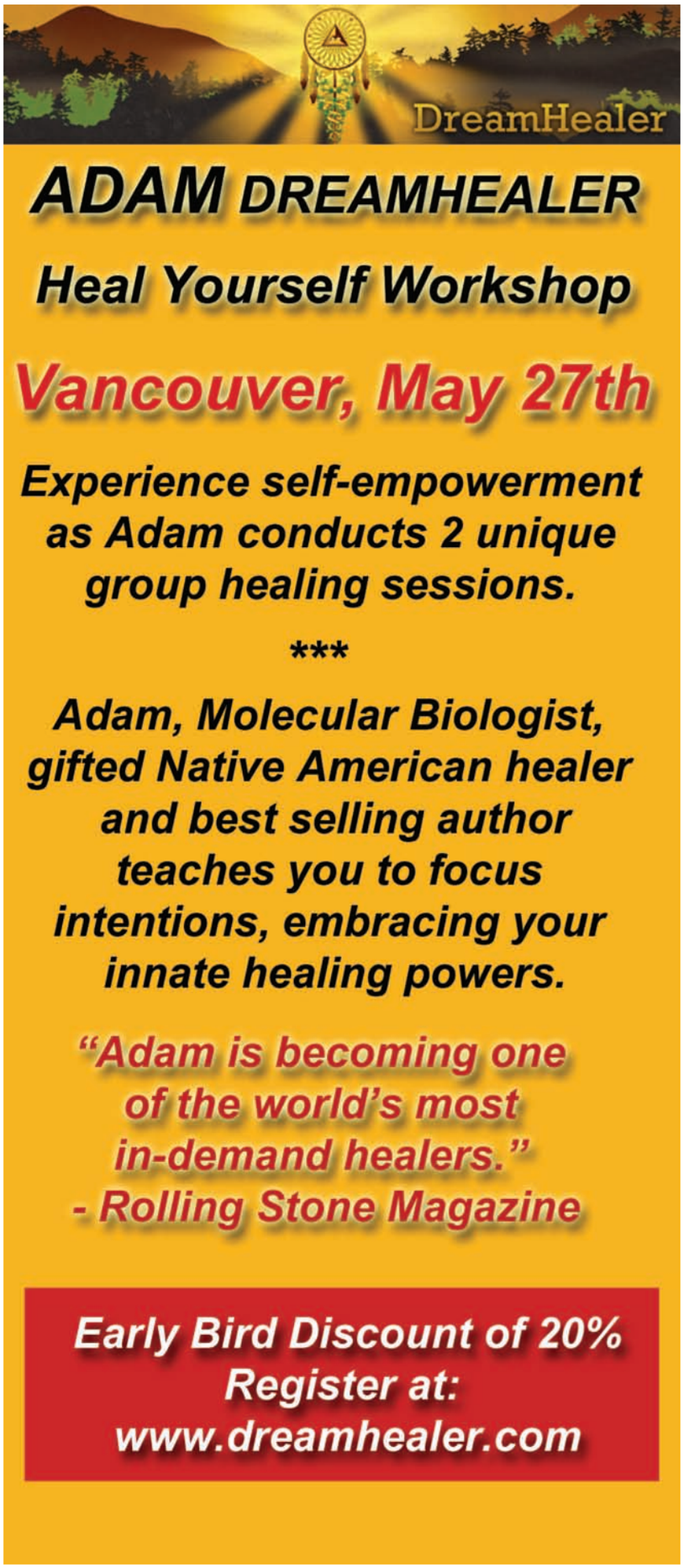
Undoubtedly, there are many important drug safety issues that affect millions of Canadians that may never get studied because of insufficient funds and these important research questions might include:

1. Are cholesterol-lowering drugs safe or effective in women and the elderly? (All the data accumulated so far says it's probably neither.) 2. Should teenagers be prescribed antidepressants, given the known harms of suicide risk? 3. Should pregnant women consume certain prescription drugs when we don't know their overall risk to the fetus? 4. Should antibiotics be limited to only the most serious, verifiable bacterial infections, which would help stop the deadly onward march of antibiotic resistance? 5. Should the elderly have their blood pressure lowered so vigorously with drugs and could this be contributing to an epidemic of hypotension (low blood pressure) that leads to falls and broken hips? It's clear the Ides of March announcement of a new $150 million won't answer important questions like these. The drug companies don't want to ask questions that might lead to the population taking less of their products.

Will further research in pharmaceutical development make a difference in the lives of Canadians? It might, but that crystal ball is murky. Would it be better to put more money into drug safety and ways to get patients off dangerous drugs to keep people healthier? I can't read the future, but that's where I'd invest my money.

A final point: everyone who swallows pills has a golden opportunity to make the world a better place. Have you had an adverse reaction to a drug? Then why not share that experience with others by asking your doctor or pharmacist to file a report with MedEffect Canada, our federal adverse drug reaction reporting system? (Just Google MedEffect Canada.) You could also call the Canada Vigilance hotline at 1-866-234-2345 (toll-free) and file a report with a new website launched in Canada at www.rxrisk.org.

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria. His new book, **Seeking Sickness: Medical Screening and the Misguided Hunt for Disease** will be out in May of this year.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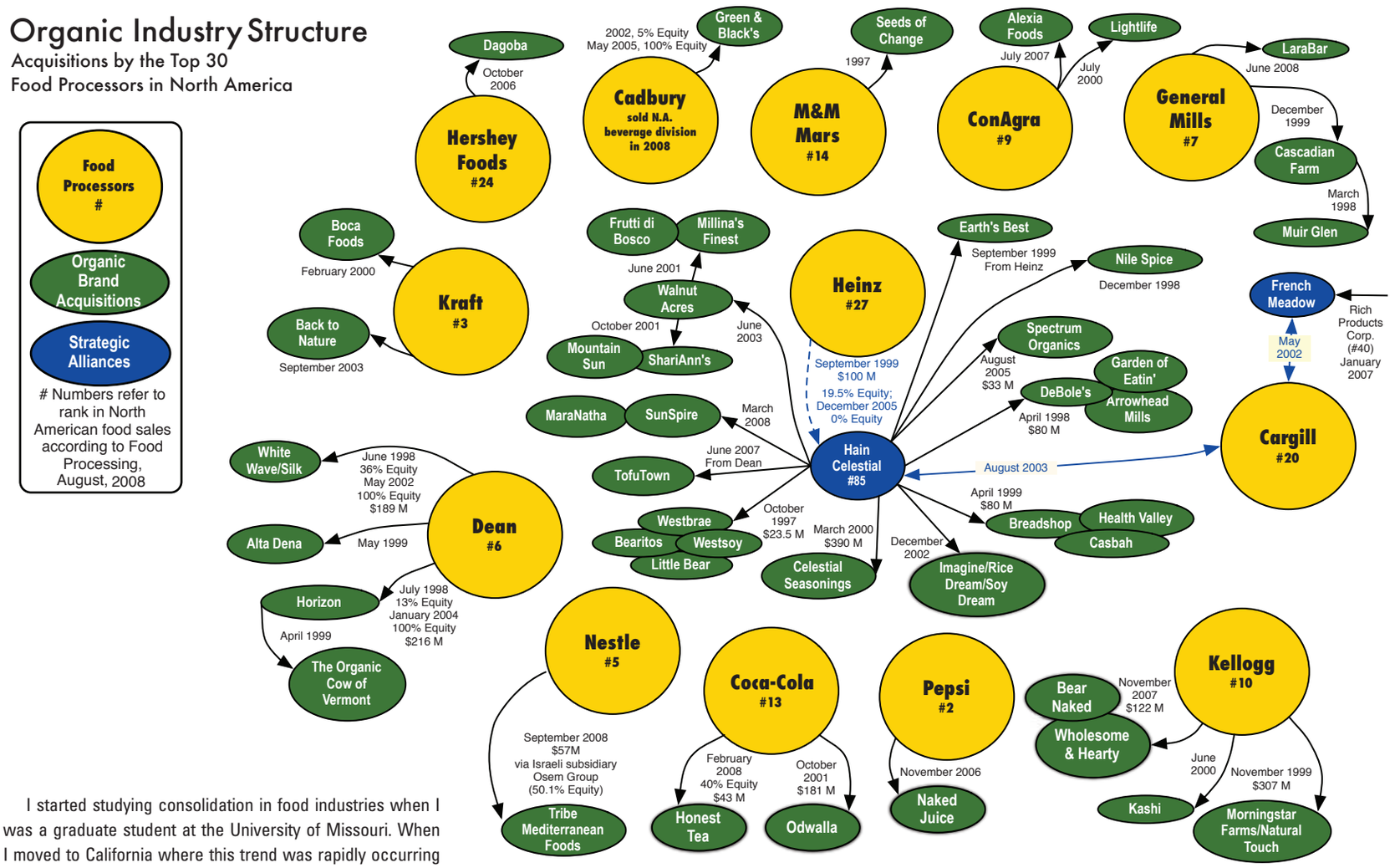
Who's eating who in organic food



I started studying consolidation in food industries when I was a graduate student at the University of Missouri. When I moved to California where this trend was rapidly occurring – despite the fact that many of the pioneering companies set out to be alternatives to the mainstream food system – people asked me to look into organic brands. In 2003, I put together a chart to visualize buyouts made by the largest food processors, many of which are hidden. Due to widespread interest, I've updated it every few years. Interestingly, some companies cited on this chart have told me that they loved it. They showed it to big retailers like Walmart, Costco and Target to convince them that organic was becoming mainstream. – *Phil Howard*

The organic industry has seen significant consolidation since the late 1990s. Many pioneering organic firms have been acquired by some of the largest food and beverage corporations in the world, such as Nestlé, Kraft and General Mills. But not all organic brands have fallen victim to this trend; at least 18 nationally distributed organic brands have resisted consolidation by remaining independent. The question is how have they managed to remain independent?

It is not for lack of offers. Arran Stephens, CEO of Nature's Path, notes that, during the peak period of acquisitions, he received two bids on the same day and he continues to receive large, unsolicited offers on a frequent basis. Many other independent firms report similar patterns, with offers that are much higher than typical for the food industry. Refusing such offers means not only giving up millions of dollars, but also facing the near certainty of increasing competition from some of the world's largest food companies.

These corporations can better afford to influence consumer demand for their products with expensive advertising. They can also subsidize price cutting on organic foods with sales from other products, in order to drive their competitors out of business. Remaining independent is therefore not what an economist would call a rational decision, but what these firms have in common is a strong commitment to values beyond just profit. In many cases, this is due to the principles and ideals of the founder, while in other firms, organizational structures are in place that discourage transfer of ownership.

Four of the remaining independent companies, for example, are organized as cooperatives: Equal Exchange and Alvarado Street Bakery are employee cooperatives, Organic Valley is a producer cooperative and Frontier Natural Products is a wholesaler cooperative. Equal Exchange goes a step further by trading directly with democratically organized, small farmer cooperatives – primarily in other countries, but also in the US –and should the company ever be sold, net proceeds are required to be given to another fair trade organization, not the worker-owners themselves.

The founders of organic food companies have learned firsthand or from others' experiences the negative consequences acquisitions have on their more idealistic goals. Stephens, who once sold a natural food company called Lifestream – and later bought it back from Kraft – has said he has seen the "soul gutted out" of acquired companies, in most cases within three years. Mo Siegel, formerly of Celestial Seasonings and Greg Steltenpohl, formerly of Odwalla, both have regrets about losing finan-

cial control of their companies and the resulting emphasis on profit. Steltenpohl has said, "[Corporations] have an agenda to consolidate and concentrate power and wealth. That's what their function is… The system itself forces certain outcomes and I really underestimated that." This recognition is in stark contrast to the optimistic language founders often use when announcing buyouts, with many using some variation of the phrase "We're not selling out, they're buying in."

Competing against an increasing number of such profit focused firms may lead independents to converge toward the rest of the industry in some areas, even as they remain more idealistic in others. Some independent firms sell to Wal-Mart, while others export their products all over the world, which may strike some organic farmers and consumers as contrary to the ideals of sustainability. Another example is introducing products that conflict with the organic movement's original emphasis on less packaging and processing of foods. Amy's Kitchen, for example, has introduced frozen, microwaveable oatmeal and while a certified organic Twinkie has yet to arrive, Nature's Path has introduced organic toaster pastries.

> Remaining independent is therefore not what an economist would call a rational decision, but what these firms have in common is a strong commitment to values beyond just profit.

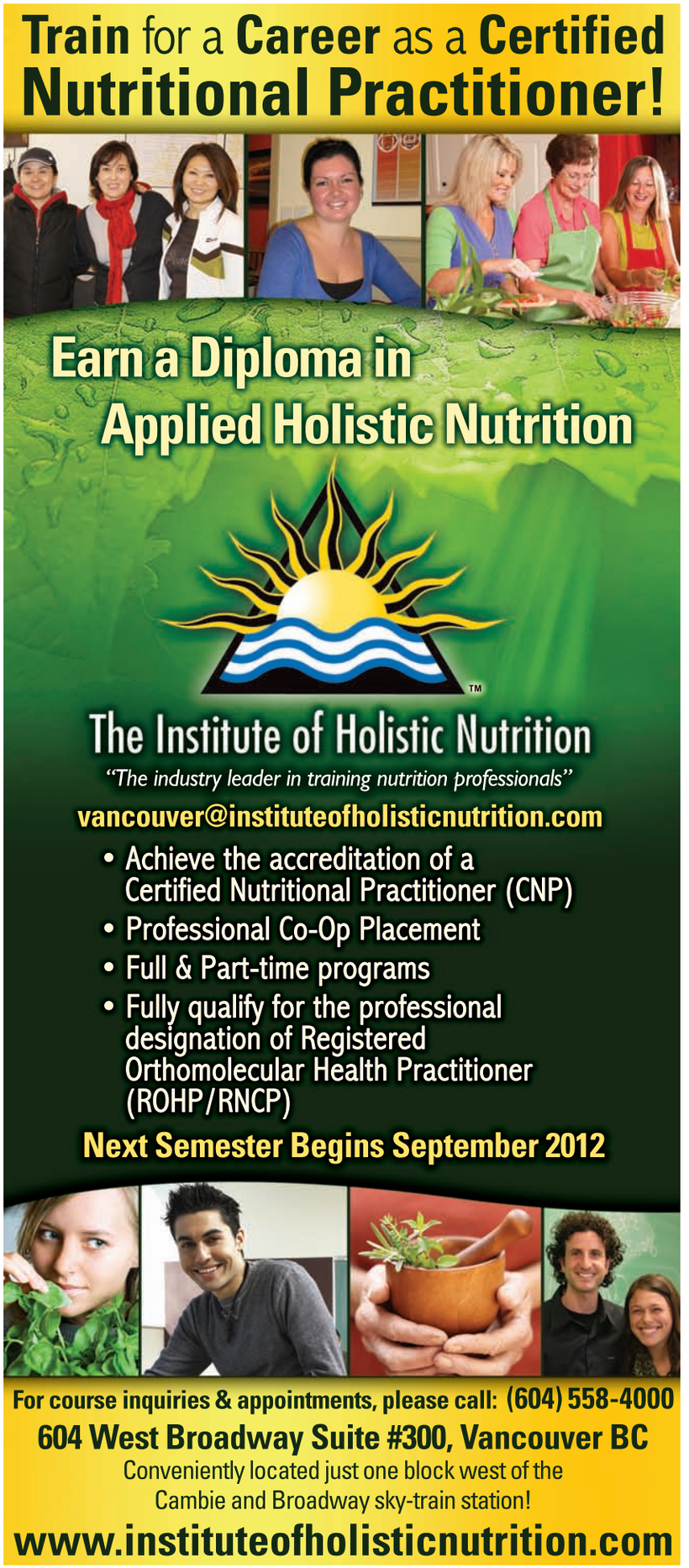
Refusing to converge toward the mainstream is risky when, as Cascadian Farm founder Gene Kahn, who sold his firm to General Mills, explains, "The intense amount of consolidation… has sorted out of a lot of the smaller players. This has occurred on a variety of fronts, including farming, manufacturing, distribution and retail."

Such changes in the organic distribution and retail sectors create some of the most significant challenges to independence. The entrance of mainstream supermarkets into organic food retailing, for example, has brought with it the practice of charging fees to manufacturers in exchange for shelf space. Dean Foods was able to subsidize such slotting fees for Silk soymilk to place it in the conventional dairy case, which contributed to its dominance in the supermarket channel. Smaller companies often cannot afford the tens of thousands of dollars per product for each retail chain that is required to implement this strategy.

While the more targeted natural/organic retail sector does not typically charge these fees, it is even more consolidated than conventional retailing, with Whole Foods dominating this category. Distribution of processed organic foods also occurs primarily through just two firms, United Natural Foods Inc. and KeHe. The smallest processors can bypass these giants if they sell directly to a nearby food cooperative, which totals approximately five percent of all organic food sales in North America. The shipping costs of expanding direct sales beyond local stores may be prohibitive, however. For larger, independent processors, unless they have already established strong brand identities and relationships with national distributors – or large retailers with their own distribution systems – getting products onto store shelves is quite difficult. As a result, some of the founders of these firms have stated that, if they were starting out today, they wouldn't be able to make it.

Consumers who want food companies that embody more of the original organic ideals would do well to seek out products from independent organic firms. Although we may not agree with all of their practices, they tend to emphasize more non-economic values, such as a commitment to sustainability and are more responsive to consumer demands than the massive food corporations of the world. Given the very uneven playing field they are competing in, independent organic processors are unlikely to survive without such support.

Philip H. Howard, PhD, is an assistant professor at the Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies at Michigan State University. www.msu.edu/~howardp/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Revitalize your water, revitalize yourself

Your kitchen on a diet

Mindful eating and consumption can change the world, a practice referred to as eco-gastronomy by the "Slow Movement." When we aspire to rightful living, we need to be aware of our food miles and whether the food is fair trade for producers. When we aspire to healthful eating, it begins by stocking the kitchen with the best ingredients possible. Perhaps it's time to put your kitchen on a diet and get rid of ingredients that are questionable in terms of being wholesome, nutritious and unadulterated?

Get rid of: the deep fryer, canned foods – especially those with BPA lining – processed, frozen meals and foods with high sodium, fat and sugar.

Stock up on: plenty of fresh seasonal vegetables – have ready-to-eat sticks of carrots, celery, cucumbers and peppers in the refrigerator as well as lots of washed greens – good quality, cold pressed and unfiltered oils for flavouring. Buy quality salt. Experiment with artisan salts.

Place a fruit basket on the table and keep it filled with fresh seasonal fruit. Renew culinary herbs and spices for seasoning. Put glass jars of healthy ingredients such as quinoa, rice and dried fruit at eye level. Keep your blender handy to make shakes and smoothies. Go crazy for leftovers – soups, casseroles, beans, grains and sprouts – perfect for a healthy snack or a meal anytime.

Certified organic food contains none of the following: toxic synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fumigants, chemical fertilizers or sewer sludge used as fertilizer, synthetic hormones or antibiotics, artificial preservatives, artificial colours or synthetic flavours and sweeteners, trans fats, irradiation, genetically engineered ingredients or use of cloned animals.

Production requires that organic farmers develop and follow detailed farm plans and be inspected every year to ensure they follow organic requirements. Those that don't cannot display the organic logo on their product.

In the 1970s, I worked as a co-ordinator at a member-owned, storefront food cooperative in Vancouver called Marginal Market. Six hundred households owned the store and members decided which foods would be stocked. Each member volunteered to work in the store two hours per month. My job was to order the food and direct the "workers" on their shift. Keeping overhead costs to a minimum allowed all of us to eat healthy, organic food at just above wholesale cost. That's when I learned the value of buying food in bulk; since then, I have never let a recycled storage jar pass me by. Buying clubs are making a comeback and perhaps storefront co-ops will too?

Carolyn Herriot is the author of **The Zero-Mile Diet: A Year-round Guide to Growing Organic Food** and is currently writing **The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook** for fall 2012 release. (Harbour Publishing) http://earthfuture.com/gardenpath/

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Food allies

In the quest for health and vitality, in the realm of food we have enemies and allies. Our food enemies entice us from every corner and it takes a little planning to surround ourselves with food allies that support our physical and mental health. (Raw plant foods are definitely allies.)

Below is a list of food foes and friends from *The Raw Food Revolution Diet* (by Cherie Soria, Brenda Davis and Vesanto Melina). Let's see which foods would steer us down the road to poor health so we know what to avoid and which items truly nourish us.

Top 10 food foes

- Refined starch products: processed foods made with white flour such as breads, pastries, cookies, pies, crackers, etc. Avoid these carbohydrate-rich foods along with the refined sugars listed next. Note: There is no need to avoid the carbs in fruit, veggies (such as yams), lentils and whole grains such as quinoa.
- Products made with white sugar, brown sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, glucose and other sugars.
- Processed foods containing partially hydrogenated fat or lard, such as crackers, cookies, margarine, microwave popcorn, pies and pastries.
- Deep-fried foods such as fried chicken, fried fish, French fries and onion rings.
- Salty, fried snack foods: potato chips, corn chips, etc.
- High-salt convenience foods: instant noodles, macaroni and cheese in a box, canned and pre-packaged stews and soups (check labels).
- Processed meats including canned meat, corned beef, luncheon meats and bacon.
- Fatty meat: spare ribs, pork chops, hamburger, etc.
- Dairy products such as cheese (and cheese-laden pizza), cream, ice cream, sour cream, whipping cream, whole milk.
- Calorie-laden beverages: alcoholic drinks, fancy coffees, milkshakes and soda pop, which is a top source of calories with no nutritional value.

Top 10 food friends

- Water: the winner as a beverage.
- Green, leafy vegetables, including kale, collards, Chinese greens, spinach, lettuce, cabbage, Brussel sprouts, mixed wild greens and broccoli.
- The full spectrum of non-starchy vegetables from asparagus to zucchini: carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, mushrooms, peppers, tomatoes and turnips.
- Fresh fruits: berries, apples, citrus fruits, peaches, plums, pineapple, melons, mango, papaya, grapes, pears, kiwi fruit.
- Legumes of all kinds: green peas, mung bean sprouts, sprouted lentils and cooked beans.
- Intact whole grains, sprouted or cooked such as buckwheat, kamut, oat groats, quinoa and rye.
- Seeds: flax, hemp, pumpkin, sunflower and sesame.
- Nuts: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts. Unsalted and without added oil.
- Herbs and spices: basil, marjoram, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, thyme and turmeric.
- Higher starch vegetables: squash, sweet potatoes, yams, potatoes, corn.

Vesanto Melina and Brenda Davis are registered dietitians in Langley (www.nutrispeak.com) and Kelowna (www.brendadavisrd.com/).

Food author Cherie Soria inspires

Now in her mid-sixties, Cherie Soria, co-author of *The Raw Food Revolution Diet*, is slim and gorgeous with three black belts in karate. See her at these events: **April 12**, 1-2pm at Karmavore in New Westminster (free). Theme: "Raw Foods for Health, Beauty and Longevity." **April 13**, 6:30-8pm at Banyen Books (free). **April 14**: Cherie hosts a one-day workshop packed with delicious raw foods and practical tips at Tao Organics in North Vancouver. Info: 800-816-2319 or info@rawfoodchef.com. Cherie packs a lot into a single day.

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Ten nutrients consumers can buy over-the-counter again

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Ever wondered if you could bottle that sleepy feeling you get after eating a big turkey dinner, for future use on one of those long, restless nights? Well, last December, the Canadian health food industry was overjoyed when L-tryptophan, along with nine other products, was released from *Schedule F restriction. Until then, all these ingredients were only available to Canadians via expensive prescriptions. According to clinical studies in the Natural Standard clinical database, these nutrients have been clinically reviewed and used with life-changing improvements. Despite their proven effectiveness, however, Canadians are only now able to obtain these products legally without a prescription.

Last year, Health Canada, with the help of its Drug Schedule Status Committee, undertook a review of the science assessment for these 10 naturally sourced medicinal ingredients and decided that none of the reasons for restricting them in Schedule F were found to apply. The committee recommended these medicinal ingredients could be regulated as non-prescription status under the Natural Health Products Regulations.

So why has tryptophan been so controversial? It is best known as a natural relaxant. It helps improve sleep patterns and aids the body in the metabolization of carbohydrates, proteins and fats. The controversy surrounding L-tryptophan is best explained in the book *The Healing Nutrients Within* by Dr. Eric R. Braverman, M.D. In 1989, a fatal outbreak of the rare autoimmune disease Eosinophilia-myalgia syndrome (EMS) cropped up. The disease causes fever, numbness and rashes. It also affects the muscles, arms and legs. In severe cases, EMS can cause death.

According to an article by William E. Crist entitled **Toxic L-tryptophan: Shedding Light on a Mysterious Epidemic*, the outbreak was traced back to the Japanese engineering firm Showa Denko. Instead of fermenting its tryptophan normally, it introduced a new strain of bacteria into the fermentation and decreased the amount of activated carbon powder used in the purification process. These seemingly small manufacturing decisions, which were probably meant to be beneficial, instead proved to be catastrophic. Previously, tryptophan users had never reported any EMS-related symptoms. However, those who were unfortunate enough to receive the "bad batch" from 1989 reported major health issues. Several of those who developed EMS from the contaminated tryptophan sued the Japanese manufacturer. Although a settlement of $2 billion was eventually reached, this uproar resulted in a FDA mandate banning the sale of tryptophan in the US. Before discovering all the manufacturing facts, some of the media published the "health risks" of taking tryptophan, fuelling the fires of panic.

In time, however, the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition studied amino acid supplementation and concluded it was safe after all. And in 1996, L-tryptophan could be obtained in the US via prescription. Canada similarly followed suit with prescription use only. Health Canada finally released L-tryptophan from Schedule F in December of 2011. As Dr. Braverman and his colleagues state, "In our opinion, if there is any risk at all to amino acid therapy, it is taking imbalanced amino acids that do not contain tryptophan."

L-Tryptophan has earned non-prescription status when sold as an oral dosage of no more than 220 mg daily. (It has prescription status when sold for human or veterinary use as a single ingredient intended for any route of administration other than oral.)

Another highly anticipated nutrient, L-carnitine (Levocarnitine), is now available to Canadians when sold for the treatment of its primary or secondary deficiency. An amino acid found in meat, this product helps reduce oxidized LDL-cholesterol levels in men and women, as well as circulating LDL-cholesterol and triglyceride levels for both genders. It also enhances exercise performance by facilitating glycogen storage during low-intensity aerobic exercise, as well as by balancing fuel utilization during high-intensity aerobic exercise. Basically stated, L-carnitine is good for many things, including mental clarity, energy, heart health and weight control.

The remaining list of released Schedule F products includes:

Apiol oil: Found in celery, parsley seed oil, dill, fennel seed, sassafras root bark, etc., it has been used in the treatment of liver, spleen and prostate diseases, as well as arthritis, anaemia and microbial infections. It has also been found useful as a laxative and diuretic.

Centella asiatica: Also known as *gotu kola*, this is a mild adaptogenic herb that is anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, anti-bacterial and diuretic. It can also aid in the treatment of anxiety and hypertension. Its ability to help heal wounds is responsible for its traditional use for leprosy.

Deanol and its salts and derivatives (also known as DMAE, precursor to choline) has been used for treating ADHD, autism, Alzheimer's disease and tardive dyskinesia. It is also used for improving memory and mood, boosting thinking skills and intelligence, oxygen efficiency, athletic performance and muscle reflexes as well as for liver spots and improving red blood cell function.

Dimethyl sulfoxide (also known as DMSO) has non-prescription status, unless sold for the treatment of interstitial cystitis or scleroderma in humans or for veterinary use. DMSO is predominantly used as a topical analgesic, a vehicle for topical application of pharmaceuticals, as an anti-inflammatory and an antioxidant. Because DMSO increases the rate of absorption of some compounds through organic tissues, including skin, it can be used as a drug delivery system. It is frequently compounded with antifungal medications, enabling them to penetrate not just skin, but also toenails and fingernails.

Dopamine (and its salts) is a neurotransmitter that helps control the brain's reward and pleasure centres. It also regulates movement and emotional responses. People with low dopamine activity may be more prone to addiction. Dopamine deficiency results in Parkinson's disease. It now has non-prescription status unless sold for administration by injection.

Gold (and its salts and derivatives) now has non-prescription status unless sold for administration by injection. Gold can **e**ase the pain of arthritis and inflammatory joint diseases.

Theobromine and its salts (found in chocolate, kola nuts, coffee and tea) is a stimulant similar to caffeine that helps open bronchial passageways for asthma and dilates blood vessels to aid circulatory problems.

Uracil and its salts has non-prescription status, unless sold for the treatment of

cancer. It helps to carry out the synthesis of many enzymes necessary for cell function through bonding with riboses and phosphates.

In the US, these products have been sold over-the-counter and are protected by the Congress-defined term "dietary supplement," as coined in the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994. A dietary supplement is a product taken by mouth that contains a "dietary ingredient" intended to supplement the diet. Such supplements fall under the general umbrella of "foods," not drugs.

Since these products have been sold in the US, they have not had any related safety concerns. In fact, they have attributed to better health and noticeable improvements for athletes. Yet until last December, free access to these supplements and their benefits was not available to Canadians because Health Canada had not yet fully reviewed and assessed them for safety, efficacy and quality, as required by the Food and Drugs Act and the Food and Drug Regulations.

Many in the health industry are elated to see these products legally available for sale; it is like a dream come true. The products work, but consumers have not had the opportunity to see the results for themselves. Canadians can now enjoy the same benefits that our US counterparts have enjoyed for decades: the freedom of choice. Canadians can use natural alternatives that provide great results without harmful pharmaceutical side effects and finally, as a bonus, no prescription is required. Another benefit to those seeking better health through prevention is that supplementation with a product such as L-carnitine may help avoid heart disease all together, saving millions in potential surgeries and prescription medication. To be frank, lives can ultimately be saved because of this Schedule F decision.

This milestone for the health industry should be celebrated, although, in retrospect, it is unfortunate it took so many years to recognize the healing

Canadians can now enjoy the same benefits that our US counterparts have enjoyed for decades: the freedom of choice.

potential of these products. Realistically, we still have a long way to go. There are more products that could benefit Canadians that are currently inaccessible under current regulations. Still, organizations such as the Canadian Health Food Association, the Natural Health Protection Association and Health Action Network are seeking to bridge the gap between the natural health industry and Health Canada. Steps such as this provide encouragement as better education brings enlightenment.

Proactively, in the spirit of cooperation, the natural health industry, the provinces and Health Canada can work together for the optimal health of all Canadians. Learn more about the organizations mentioned: CHFA www.chfa.ca/en-us/home.aspx NHPA http://nhppa.org HAN www.healthactionnetwork.com/

*Schedule F refers to Sections C.01.041 to C.01.049 of the Food and Drug Regulations, controlling the sale of medicinal ingredients. These ingredients require a prescription for both human and veterinary use, unless the veterinary use it is labelled for is in a form unsuitable for human use. In 2004, the Natural Health Products Regulations came into force and all naturally sourced ingredients of a natural health product became governed by these regulations.

**_Toxic L-tryptophan: Shedding Light on a Mysterious Epidemic:_* www.seedsofdeception.com/Public/L-tryptophan/2BackgroundInformation/index.cfm

Dr. Eldon Dahl, ND, is the founder and director of the Life Choice™ nutraceutical product line. Its L-Typtophan product has earned an EN# from Health Canada (www.lifechoice.net)

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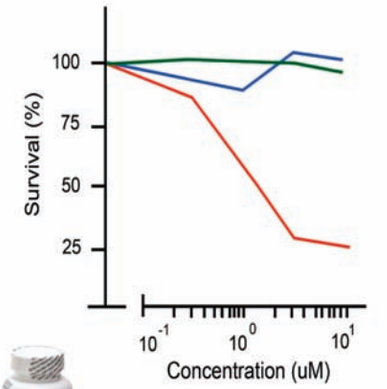

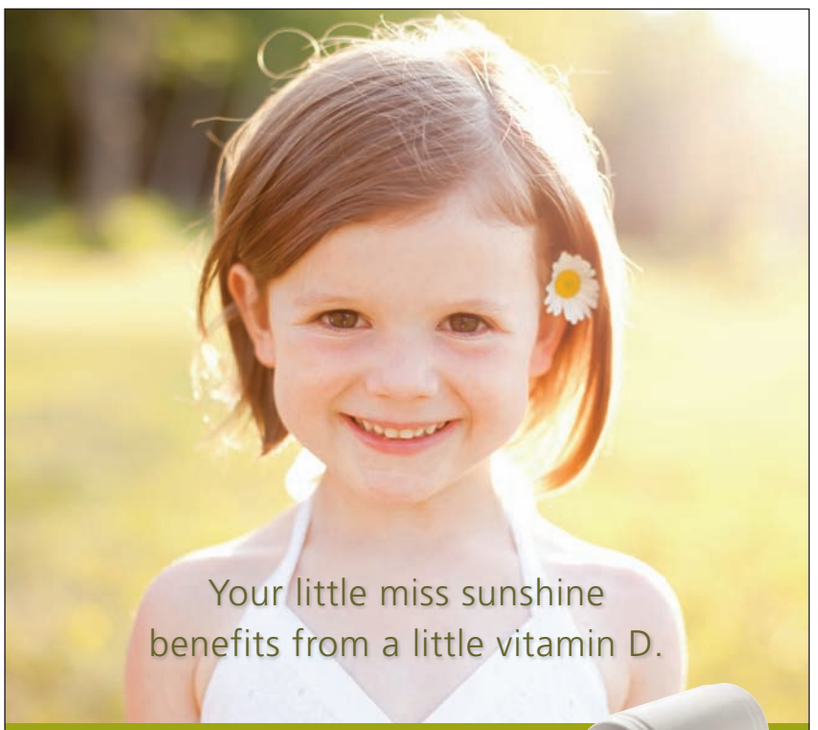

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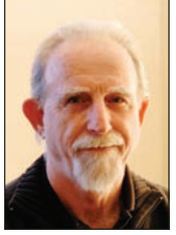

Mac McLaughlin

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StarWise

April 2012

IN OBSERVING the night sky, the ancients came to realize that the planting, harvesting and hunting seasons could be predicted by the Sun's return to a particular point in the sky each year. They also noted certain phenomena would prevail when the wandering stars (planets) moved through particular sectors of the sky. Thus, astrology came into existence. Now, let's take a look and see what the planets and stars decree.

The one planet that has caught my eye is Uranus. This planet speaks about revolution, innovation and transformation. Shift, shock, change and rearrange are the types of activities we experience when this planet comes a-knockin'. Uranus takes approximately 84 years to circle the Sun. Presently, he is moving through the sign Aries, which is a very potent combination. Revolutionary Uranus seeks to overthrow the status quo. Seemingly a lawbreaker, he is just as much a lawmaker when the dust settles.

Freedom from tyranny and injustice comes along in the wake of powerful Uranian transits. The last time Uranus visited volatile Aries, we experienced the 1929 stock market crash and the onset of the great depression. Millions of souls were displaced as many people roamed east and west seeking aid and employment. Those that survived the dirty thirties certainly had revolutionized their lives. The previous cycle before the stock market crash brought us the 1848 Revolution in France, which changed the way of life throughout all of Europe.

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
The full Moon on April 6 will bring more than a few revelations your way. You are a walking lightning rod, drawing down highly charged, creative and innovative currents from above. Cut away from the past and move into the future.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
You are on a roll and you must make the best of it. Jupiter casts his blessings in the form of excellent timing and strong contacts within the circles in which you move. The Taurus new Moon on April 21 signals a new start.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Venus visits Gemini for the next four months bringing high times, creativity, love and resources. Venus represents beautification, socialization and internal values. You may have to make some uncomfortable decisions in order to attain harmony, balance and peace of mind. It's your time to shine.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
The full Moon on April 6 will illuminate your inner sky, and answers regarding career and home concerns will manifest. You're in the midst of a big makeover, so big you may only be marginally aware of it at this point.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
Career and travel sectors are hot. Opportunities present themselves in which you can use your creative genius to its full extent. You have a free roll, which means you can carve out your own pathway the way you want it to be.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
You hit the street running as plans congeal and you have to get real in order to handle all that is on your platter. Make sure you don't hit the street literally, as accidents and incidents can arise easily at this time.

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Well, here we are again. We have a nine-ball juggling act going on and all the balls are up in the air. Uranus began its visit in Aries on March 12, 2012 and will stay until May 15, 2018 and we know it's going to be hot; it already is. The mid-East is nearing its boiling point and the Arab Spring uprisings are right on time. Uranus happens to rule over all things electronic and atomic. The nuclear chess game continues and the stakes go higher as will oil prices and everything else. We know that nuclear power can either assist mankind or destroy life on the planet. Spin the dial in any direction and we can see what needs correction, direction and renewal. The mood is restless. It is a time of revolution. I'm not talking anarchy and violence, although wars will come from within and without. What we need is a revolution in consciousness and a re-evaluation of what is true, real and necessary.

Uranus creates a charged atmosphere of rebellion and upheaval and while it travels though fiery Aries, we will have to be creative and innovative in order to deal with what is on our platter. If you were to attain all you have dreamed about and longed for, do you think you would be happy and content? The answer is "No." You would still be restless and seeking higher heights and quests. The rich, the poor and everyone else live to the limit of their means. While all this is going on, the clock is ticking and the spirit within dwindles and withers away. One people, one planet, one love.

LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
The Libra full Moon on April 6 brings home all kinds of important and useful information. You are in a time of redirection, correction and elimination of whatever has held you back in the past. Endings and beginnings take place.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
A time of internal perusal has arrived. Jupiter casts his good energy your way bringing hope, faith, luck and opportunity. The long view tells the tale of correction, discipline and hard work. Doing the work and the correction now is the best bet; the future gets easier.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
Someone left the gate open and you can run free. With that sense of freedom, your vision of the overall picture becomes enhanced. Love and all kinds of enriched relationships of many forms are heading your way. Can you see it?

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
The big wheels are in motion planetary-wise. The outer planets have a play and a say as to what is unfolding in your life. It is an exceptionally dynamic and truly cosmic time in which the Goat has reached the pinnacle. Now what?

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
Your brain is on fire. Well, actually that might be a normal thing for the average Aquarius. The point is that high energy is coming in creative blasts. All intellectual avenues such as education and communication get a boost. Internal spring cleaning takes precedence.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
Mars moves slowly through your opposite sign Virgo throughout the month bringing up contentious issues and all types of contrastments. You might be in a truly creative mood as you sense the excitement that is unfolding. You are braver than you imagined.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109

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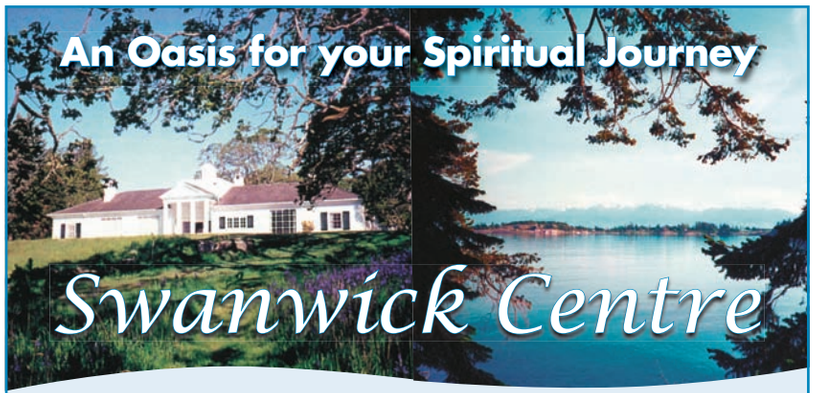

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Just now

an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of Common Ground. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.

JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film A Beautiful Mind, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

JR: I remember you saying before you published your last book that the next one would be about why there isn't peace on this planet. Was finding a solution one of the major intentions of A New Earth?

ET: Yes, to see the nature of the major dysfunction. That's why I talk quite a bit about the ego in this book. We need to recognize the nature of the dysfunction. Sometimes, even very great Eastern teachers sometimes neglect that part because they're not really touched by the magnitude of, especially, the Western ego. So it's very important for us to see the dysfunction so that we can recognize it when it arises.

Part of the new book is about recognizing the ego, which I regard as a semi-autonomous energy. It's an energy field. Every thought you think is an energy field. It has a form and then it dissolves and then there is another form. The ego itself is an energy field and it has a collective and individual aspect. Every indi-

vidual ego is part of the collective. They're connected. Every individual is a manifestation of the collective. To recognize that is essential because the ego, being a very clever entity, has many ways of reappearing. Even if you've seen it in one disguise, it can suddenly reappear in a new one.

You might suddenly realize your whole sense of self, identity, is being derived from your possessions and social position. You see that your whole sense of identity is bound up with that and you recognize one aspect of ego. Well, usually it only comes to people when they suffer, when the identification with something no longer works…

It's recognizing the ego in its many disguises. I've met Buddhist monks who had enormous egos without knowing it. I remember being in a monastery afraid to approach them because they seemed so aloof. Yet I've met other Buddhist monks who were like little children and it was a joy to talk to them because they'd laugh and not take themselves seriously at all. They didn't take the whole Buddhist

thing seriously either, yet they practised it knowing it was only a form and they weren't identified with it.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form.

Excerpted from **Just now: a two-part interview with Eckhart Tolle** by Joseph Roberts. Read the full interview online. Go to www.commonground.ca Click on archives. Click on 2007 at the top of the page. For part one, click on September 2007. For part two, click on October 2007.

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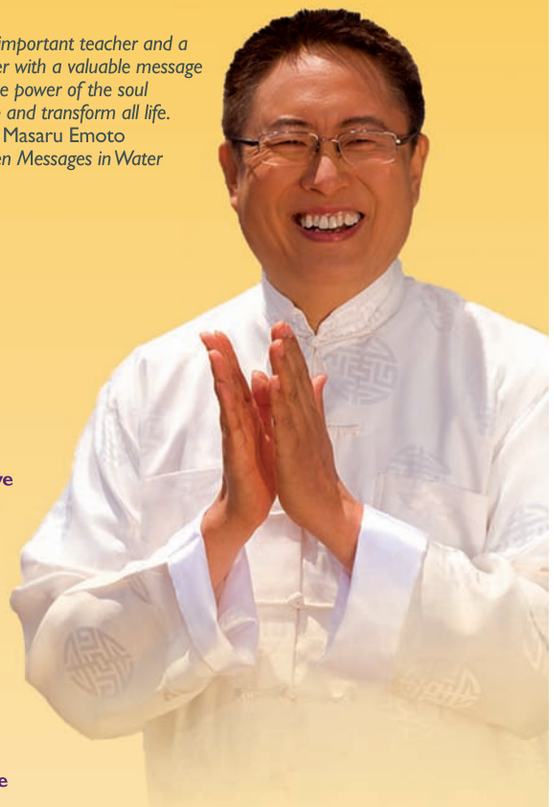

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Mantra music

When yoga arrived in the West, it brought its own jubilant soundtrack along for the ride. The practice of chanting sacred mantras from India's ancient yogic traditions has taken on new life, thanks to the work of adventurous, modern musicians like Krishna Das, Jai Uttal, Wah, Snatam Kaur, MC Yogi, Deva Premal, Donna DeLory and others, including guitarist GuruGanesha Singh.

The styles and sounds of modern mantra music are varied, but most have their root in kirtan – call and response chanting. It's essentially a form of musical meditation. The kirtan wallah, or leader, sings a mantra – a sacred name or phrase – and the crowd sings it back. This process is repeated over and over until everyone is completely blissed-out. The repetition induces a meditative state and the music engages the emotions. It's a great practice for those who find more passive forms of sitting meditation tedious. Getting up and dancing is encouraged at a kirtan.

GuruGanesha Singh

The chanting of mantras was already an ancient practice when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu (born 1486) popularized the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra in the Indian city of Navadvipa. This particular mantra was revived by the Krishna Consciousness movement that took off in the late 60s and even became a pop hit in 1969, in a version recorded by George Harrison and the Radha Krishna Temple group.

Many of the key artists who established the current mantra music scene are baby boomers who were among the disaffected youth that turned to India in search of enlightenment in the early 70s. Certain gurus seemed to nurture musical as well as spiritual development. Krishna Das, Jai Uttal and Bhagavan Das are all disciples of the Hindu master Neem Karoli Baba, who fostered the practice of kirtan as a form of bhakti yoga, the yoga of devotion. Closer to home, future kirtan luminaries like GuruGanesha Singh and Sat Kartar Kaur were direct disciples of the Sikh guru Yogi Bhajan who emigrated from India to North America in 1968. He went on to establish Kundalini yoga and launch the Yogi Tea empire. Yogi Bhajan also encouraged musical pursuits among his students. A bhajan is itself a traditional devotional song form.

While Hindu-based kirtan artists like Krishna Das and Jai Uttal sing Sanskrit mantras, the Sikh mantras performed by artists like Snatam Kaur, Nirinjan Kaur and GuruGanesha are sung in Gurmukhi. An encounter with the core Gurmukhi mantra *Wahe Guru, Guru Ram Das* at a Boston yoga class in 1972 started GuruGanesha on the spiritual path. Adopting the Sikh faith, he sang in ashrams for decades, but went into high gear at the dawn of the new century, launching Spirit Voyage records and the career of Snatam Kaur, acting as her manager, guitarist and songwriting partner.

His latest project, the GuruGanesha Band, is an eclectic ensemble blending the diverse sounds of electric and acoustic guitars, sarangi, cello, sitar, tabla and vocals among other enticing sonic flavours. As with many of today's mantra artists, all the marvels of modern musical expression are marshalled to unlock the blissful healing power inherent in these ancient languages of love and devotion.

Veteran music journalist **Alan di Perna** has written for Yoga Journal, Rolling Stone, Guitar World and grammy.com among many other outlets.

April 8 & 9: GuruGanesha Singh and his band perform at St. James Community Square in Vancouver along with guest artist Vancouver's own Nirinjan Kaur. Tickets/info: www.guruganesha.com. Tickets: Yoga West 604-732-9642, Bound Lotus Yoga, North Vancouver 604-762-2798 and Banyen Books 604-732-7912

Endings and beginnings

Sometimes, when relationships end, both parties are in agreement that it is time to move on. Difficult though it may be, it is even harder when it is over for one, but not for the other.

When we first fall in love, it is all so romantic. We romanticize the love as well as the other person. We begin to build a new world with our love object at its centre. We *know* our love is special and that it will last. So sure are we in fact, we may even commit to "until death do us part." This assumes we can and will continue to *will* ourselves to keep on loving.

Love, however, has a life of its own and cannot be controlled and orchestrated according to our wishes. Love is like a bouquet of roses. Sometimes, the roses last and last and we cannot believe how well preserved they have been. Other times, even a bud will droop on its stem without ever opening.

Yes, there are many things we can do to extend the life of roses and to nourish and support our relationships. We can commit to being faithful and to do our best to keep the relationship flourishing. We can work hard to overcome problems or differences. However, if the love is gone, trying to keep the relationship alive may be like keeping a vase of wilted roses on your desk.

We are all on our own individual soul journey and those couples whose love lasts a lifetime are truly blessed. We grow and change over the years and sometimes one partner outgrows the other. It may be too that we came together for specific learning and that learning is complete.

Ideally, if we truly love another, we would want what is best for him or her, even if it means separating from us. More often than not, ego kicks in, in a big way. Ego tries to convince the other to stay and does not really listen to what is being said. Ego bargains: "We can make it better… Give me another chance… You have not really tried… No one will love you like I do."

Ego has its hands full. It desperately does not want to let go of the loved one and at the same time panics about being alone. In some ways, it is like a death and one could experience shock, disbelief, anger and grief. It is not uncommon to cycle through stages, including denial and bargaining, before gradual acceptance begins to emerge. It is hard to imagine carrying on in life without the one we love.

It reminds me of the Monarch butterfly, which flutters into our awareness delighting us with its presence. We enjoy its beauty and stop what we are doing to really take it in. We know we cannot keep it.

If we truly love another, we would want what is best for him or her even if it means separating from us.

Love comes to us like that too. I believe that, if we treat it as a rare gift, savouring it and nourishing it together, it can keep growing and deepening.

However, there are times when a love has a built-in lifespan and there is more growing that needs to happen for both people that would not happen if they were to remain together. Hopefully, we can realize this, transcend ego and release our partner in love. Then our task is to move forward towards whatever the universe holds in store for us.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, CDs and the new "Creating Healthy Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca See display ad this issue.

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On APRIL 15th, His Holiness will also be conducting a one-day workshop teaching breathing & meditation techniques at the Radisson Richmond.

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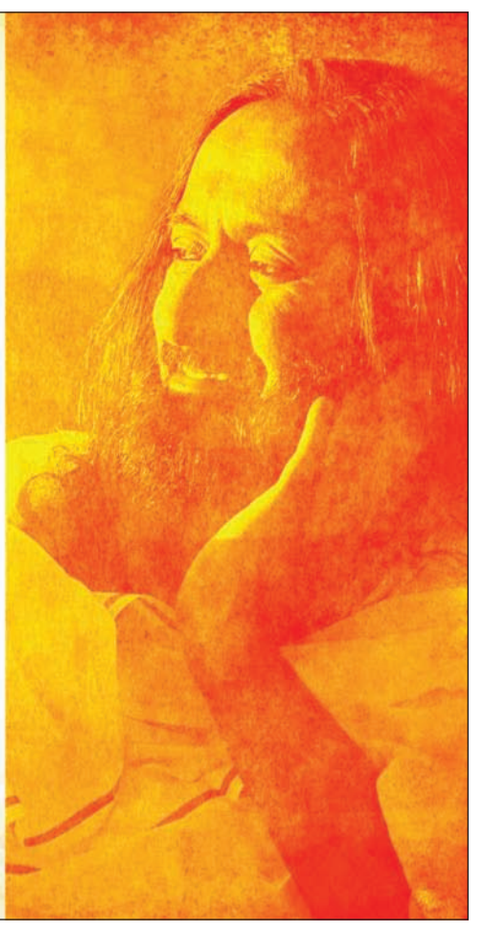

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In the beginning…

Journey of the Universe co-writer Brian Thomas Swimme

Given that recent polls suggest that around 40 percent of Americans believe that God created human beings in their present form 10,000 years ago, some people might consider *Journey of the Universe* quite a radical documentary. This story of the universe, which has screened on PBS, starts around 14 billion years ago with the Big Bang and it doesn't talk explicitly about God. However, from start to finish, its enthusiastic narrator Brian Thomas Swimme shares his sense of awe at the miracle, and sometimes the mystery, of life – how life came into being and how we learned and adapted.

Swimme, who co-wrote the script with Yale University historian of religions Mary Evelyn Tucker, maintains a firmly evolutionary approach, yet at the same time conveys a deep sense of our interconnectedness with the universe and the planet that has borne us. "We are genetic cousins to every living being," says the white-haired Swimme, as he wanders around the sun drenched Greek island of Naxos, stomping ground of the mathematician Pythagoras. He marvels, as his hero did, at the connection between life and patterns: "Is all life being organized?" he asks. Physics, genetics and anthropology are used to illustrate how we are "participants in a vast intricate system that is something like a living cell."

In the best popular science way, this ambitious doc is backed up by some impressive visuals – CGIs of dinosaurs, space footage, deft image compositing – as Swimme brings us up to present day with a message about our social and ecological responsibilities. *Journey of the Universe* has a public screening on April 25 at the Canadian Memorial Church in Vancouver (www.canadianmemorial.org) and a panel discussion follows.

Family-friendly *One Life* (out now) looks at the cool strategies animals have developed to survive. The smooth tones of narrator Daniel Craig pull together dependably gorgeous footage from BBC Earth, featuring normally solitary cheetahs that work as a team, the tool-using prowess of capuchin monkeys, a colony of ants that farms and the fishing magic of Florida dolphins. Enjoyable, although episodic.

The annual Reel 2 Real International Film Festival for Youth returns to Vancity Theatre (April 13-20) with films covering difficult themes such as bullying, suicide, divorce and poverty. One film I can recommend is *On the Sly (A Pas de Loup),* a drama depicting childhood alienation, but treated in an original and humorous way. The story centres around a six-year-old, who, to test her theory that she's invisible to her parents, slips into the forest where her solitary adventures begin. I saw the dubbed version, which, in spite of my misgivings, probably didn't make a huge amount of difference, as the film is mostly an interior monologue seen through the child's eyes. You hear rather than see the adults, except for the backs of heads and legs. It's a child's world, but grown-ups should enjoy it too. Even the ambiguous ending teases with possibilities.

Finally, a viewing of the documentary *White Water, Black Gold* reminded me why passions are running so high over Enbridge's Northern Gateway Pipelines Project. Debut director David Lavallee travels to the Tar Sands water source at Snow Dome mountain where glaciers are in rapid retreat. Following the flow to the cancer hotspot of Fort Chipewyan, he discovers some seriously lax environmental protection and that when water meets tar, "truth is liquid."

Robert Alstead writes at www.2020Vancouver.com

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Cycling makes cities cool

Cities cover just two percent of the world's land area, yet they account for about 70 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. According to the United Nations, 59 percent of us now live in cities; in developing countries, 81 percent of people are urbanites. And those figures are rising every day.

Even though cities are a major source of emissions fuelling climate change, "They are also places where the greatest efficiencies can be made," according to Joan Clos, executive director of UN-HABITAT. "With better urban planning and greater citizen participation, we can make our hot cities cool again."

The benefits of doing so go beyond reducing the risk of global warming. Cities designed for humans rather than cars are better places to live, with lower pollution levels, less traffic congestion, more parks and public spaces, improved opportunities for social interaction and healthier citizens.

With longer days and blossoming trees making Vancouver brighter, my thoughts turn to the joys of bicycling. Getting people out of cars and on to bikes won't solve all our climate and pollution problems, and bicycling isn't possible for everyone, but the more people cycle, the better off we'll all be. It's also a great way to stay in shape and make the commute more enjoyable – and often faster.

Cities designed for humans rather than cars are better places to live, with lower pollution levels, less traffic congestion, more parks and public spaces.

I'm particularly excited this year as the international cycling conference Velo-city Global is being held in Vancouver from June 26 to 29. The event is expected to bring together about 1,000 traffic planners, cycling advocates, architects, educators, politicians and others from around the world "to share best practices for creating and sustaining cycling-friendly cities, where bicycles are valued as part of daily transport and recreation."

Gil Peñalosa, who will open and close the conference, says Vancouver has done a lot for cycling but it's "not great yet." Peñalosa, director of the Canadian non-profit organization 8-80 Cities and former commissioner of Parks, Sports and Recreation in Bogota, Colombia, believes North American city dwellers could learn from Europeans when it comes to encouraging cycling.

"Even in Europe, a lot of the bicycle infrastructure has been done in the last 30 years. And it didn't get there by chance," Peñalosa said in an interview with the European Cyclists' Federation, noting that, in Amsterdam, cycling infrastructure and rates increased only after active campaigning by citizens. He also said that bicycle-friendly planning can complement well designed public transportation systems.

I hope the Velo-city Global conference will get more people in Vancouver and beyond excited about cycling. Those who ride know one of the best reasons is that it's fun. It's also good for you. Regular cycling reduces the risk of a range of health problems, from obesity to heart disease to stress. And that helps the economy by decreasing overall healthcare costs.

That it will also contribute to lower greenhouse gas emissions and pollution and that it can make cities more enjoyable places to live are even more reasons to get on your bike whenever you can.

Dr. David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Editorial and Communications Specialist Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

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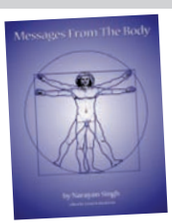

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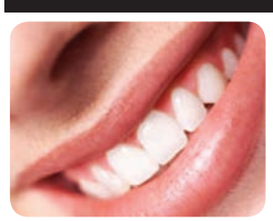

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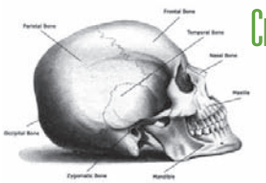

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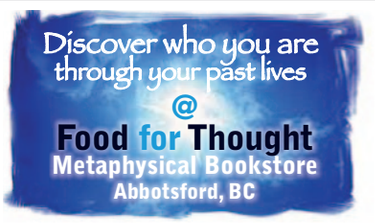

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– Fran Lebowitz

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Enlightened Living FREE Classes:
- **Easy Steps to Start-up Your Organic Garden,** Sat. Apr 14, 2-4 pm
- **How Eating Plant Protein Could Change Your Life,** Sat. Apr 28, 2-4 pm
- **Meditation for Life series—10 classes** Theory & Practice of Jyoti Meditation. Call for curriculum & readings to study.

Info for Richmond & Vancouver and
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"Through meditation on the inner Light and Sound of God we can each transform our own gloomy environment into one of light and joy."
~ H.H. Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.
– Mother Teresa

Simple changes can bring more meaning to your life, create happiness and well-being. Ongoing free programs on the spiritual practice of meditation on inner Light and Sound. Every Tuesday, 7 pm.
Location: Pacific Institute of Reflexology
535 W. 10th Ave, Vancouver
Free parking in the back.

LETTERS

Take it up for Earth Day

Earth Day Canada (www.earthday.ca) is issuing action-based challenges urging all Canadians –kids, classrooms, groups, businesses, individuals and families – to make positive changes to their daily habits. The challenges run from April 1 to April 30 and encourage participants to take up a new action for 21 days, a period long enough for the action to become a part of their daily routine.

Lifestyle choices are typically based on convenience, complacency and habit, but these come with a price. Earth Day Canada's "Take it up for Earth Day" [http://www.earthday.ca/takeitup/] campaign can help you make better decisions about what you eat, drink and what resources you use. Try something new that's good for you and the planet. Take up one (or more) of these pro-environmental behaviours:

- Eat and prepare plant-based foods at home.
- Drink tap water and get water-wise.
- Detox your personal care routine.
- Activate your lifestyle with outdoor, unplugged activities.

Earth Day Canada (EDC), a national environmental charity founded in 1990, provides Canadians with the practical knowledge and tools they need to lessen their impact on the environment. In 2004, the Washington-based North American Association for Environmental Education, the world's largest association of environmental educators, recognized EDC as the top environmental education organization in North America, for its innovative year-round programs and educational resources. In 2008, it was chosen as Canada's "Outstanding Non-profit Organization" by the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication. EDC regularly partners with thousands of organizations in all parts of Canada.

– www.earthday.ca

Job losses inevitable with Gateway

Thank you for shining the spotlight on Canada's rising petro-dollar. [*Gateway Pipeline Pros and Cons*, *Common Ground*, March 2012]. This issue has been completely ignored by the mainstream media. Both the Gateway pipeline and the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline would definitely put a premium on the Canadian dollar. In addition, at least two natural gas liquefaction facilities are planned for the BC coast, to boost exports of natural gas, further pushing up our petro-dollar. On top of that, we have rapidly rising coal exports.

Job losses in the Canadian manufacturing sector will be inevitable, as our strong currency makes our products non-competitive in foreign markets. Canadians shopping south of the border will lead to job losses in Canadian retailing. All of this is blissfully ignored by Mr. Harper and his crew.

All of the power generated by Site C on the Peace River (not yet approved) will be required for these projects. Natural gas liquefaction requires immense amounts of electricity. The Gateway pipeline alone would gobble up 20 percent of site C power.

It is easy to see why BC Hydro and the BC government argue that the demand for electricity will rise by 50 percent in the next 20 years. The demand will come from these mega projects – from the aggressive export of fossil fuels – not from domestic needs. Never mind that the unique and beautiful Peace River will be flooded, 8,000 acres of the most fertile agricultural land will disappear and that these fossil fuels will accelerate global warming. The fossil fuel exporters require electricity and they will get it at a fraction of what the public pays. These grandiose schemes are sold to the public on the false premise that they create jobs.

By Canadian law, Enbridge's liability is capped at a mere $40 million dollars in case of an off shore spill.

– Tina Childs

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Datebook

Seva Canada turns 30 **Earth Day April 22**

For rates & placements email **datebook@commonground.ca**

April 5 through May 13
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APR 8 & 9
Join GuruGanesha & his all-star band: St. James Community Square, 3214 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver. $25/advance, $35/door, $40/Two Night Pass. Premier Seating $35/advance, $45/door, $56/Two Night Pass. Tickets at www.guruganesha.com or Yoga West 604-732-9642, Bound Lotus Yoga, North Vancouver 604-762-2798 and Banyen Books 604-732-7912.

APR 11-13
Convergence Writers Retreat, writing for social justice, Heart's Rest Retreat Centre, New Denver BC. For details: www.heartsrest.com/convergence/convergence-writers-retreat/

APR 13
HappyBelly! "taster" evening, 7-9:30pm, $35. Intro evening for weekend workshop of movement explorations & medical qigong, www.happybelly.ca

APR 13
Starchild and the Mystiques CD Release Party concert/dance. Ironworks, 235 Alexander St., Vancouver, 8pm, $20. Free CD "Libere". Special guest MC Mahara Brenna.

APR 13-15
HappyBelly! workshop, $225. What does your belly know? Movement explorations & medical qigong to trust the wisdom of your gut, www.happybelly.ca

APR 15 & 16
Humankind An Evening of Peace and Inspiration (Apr. 16, 7pm) with His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of the Art of Living Foundation. St. Andrew's-Wesley Church, 1022 Nelson. Apr. 15: His Holiness leads a one-day workshop teaching meditation & breathing, Richmond. Tickets/info: www.srisrivancouver.ca or 604-562-5570.

APR 19
Natural Home Cleaning Workshop: Metropolitan Relaxation Studio, 304-350 East 2nd Ave., 7-8PM. $44. Create Chemical-Free Cleaning Products. 778-997-9642, www.metropolitanrelaxation.com

April 20-22
Discover the "Power of Presence" based on Eckhart Tolle's latest retreat. At Swanwick Centre, a beautiful 32-acre ocean-front sanctuary near Victoria, BC. swanwick@shaw.ca, 250-744-3354, www.swanwickcentre.ca

APR 20-22
Advanced Reflexology: Clinical Skills Weekend Course. Honing your skills. $395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

APR 23-MAY 12
Seva - Beyond the Darkness: A photo exhibit to honour the 30th Anniversary of Seva Canada. Photos by the international, award winning photographer Larry Louie. HSBC Pendulum Gallery, 885 West Georgia St. Donor Reception April 26, 6-8 pm. RSVP to admin@seva.ca www.seva.ca/anniversaryevents.htm

APR 26
"Fill Your Workshops With Ease" with Callan Rush, Vancouver. Avoid the 3 massive mistakes workshop leaders make that keep their event rooms empty. 7-10PM. FREE when you pre-register now. Call Katie at 1-888-686-7409.

APR 29
Mental Health Regained Workshop featuring James Greenblatt, MD. Learn how to move from mental illness to mental health with orthomolecular therapy. Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. Information and registration www.orthomed.org

MAY 2
"Highpoint of the Spiritual Year" – Wesak Full Moon. Join us for a powerful world meditation. FREE. 7-9 pm, Roundhouse Community Centre (Pacific @ Davie). 604-983-0926.

MAY 2, 4, 11
Free demos of effective pain elimination. See the Yuen Method Work on the spot. With Colette Stefan. May 2 Penticton; May 4 Kelowna; May 11 Vancouver. Also at Spring Festival of Awareness, Naramata Apr 28-29. See display ad or visit colette@crystalinvevision.com, 1-306-584-9135. www.crystalinevision.com

May 4-6
Body, Mind & Spirit Psychic & Wellness Fair Ridge Meadows Home Show: #4-22374 Lougheed Hwy. Maple Ridge, BC. More details #604-464-7199, www.underthemoongifts.com

MAY 4-6
Yoga for Your Mind- Wayne Liquorman Advaita Living Teaching Weekend- Stanwood WA. Contact heidi@skylinedecking.com. More info including times at Advaita.org

MAY 11-13
EPIC Vancouver sustainable consumer show & eco-marketplace. An annual celebration of planet-friendly living. 300 exhibitors, inspiring ideas, exciting entertainment and smart shopping opportunities. www.vancouver.epicexpo.com

MAY 11-13
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30 PM, $10; Course $395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

MAY 12
David Hickey, Crystal Journey: Benefit concert celebrating Seva Canada's 30th Anniversary. Magical meditative sounds of quartz crystal bowls, paiste gongs and more. 8PM, St. Mark's Anglican Church, 1805 Larch. $25/person. Tickets at door or online at www.crystaljourney.ca and at Banyen Books.

MAY 18-20
Spiritual Tools for Life's Challenges: B.C. Eckankar Regional Seminar: University of British Columbia, Student Union Building. Guests attend 1 session free. Everyone welcome. www.eckankar-bc.ca or 1-800-708-9060.

MAY 27
Adam DreamHealer Heal Yourself workshop Vancouver. Experience Self- Empowerment as Adam orchestrates 2 group healing sessions & introduces his new DVD. All registration www.dreamhealer.com

MAY 27-JUN 1
Heal Body Memory & trauma with Somatic Archaeology™! Intergenerational Healing Workshop with Ruby Gibson, Hollyhock, Cortes Island. www.rubygibson.com www.hollyhock.ca

SEPT 24-28
Relax & Renew Restorative Yoga Teacher Training in Vancouver with internationally renowned yoga teacher, physiotherapist and author Judith Hanson Lasater. www.soulspringwellness.ca

ONGOING

HU, A Love Song to God: Experience, free, a Community HU. 1st Friday 8PM, 333 Chesterfield, North Vancouver, 15996 84th, Surrey. 1st Tuesday 7:30PM, 6550 Bonsor, Burnaby, www.eckankar-bc.ca

SUNDAYS

Centre for Spiritual Living: Join us every Sunday @ 11 AM for practical spirituality with great music. Meditation: 10:15 AM. 1880 Triumph Street, Suite 8 (at Victoria Drive), Vancouver. Info: 604-321-1225, www.cslvancouver.com

SOS (Science of Spirituality): See Resource Directory listing in Spiritual Practices for schedule in Richmond, Vancouver & Victoria. 604-277-1247. All Welcome. www.sos.org

TUESDAYS

Reflexology Student Clinic 6–10pm. One- hour sessions $20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

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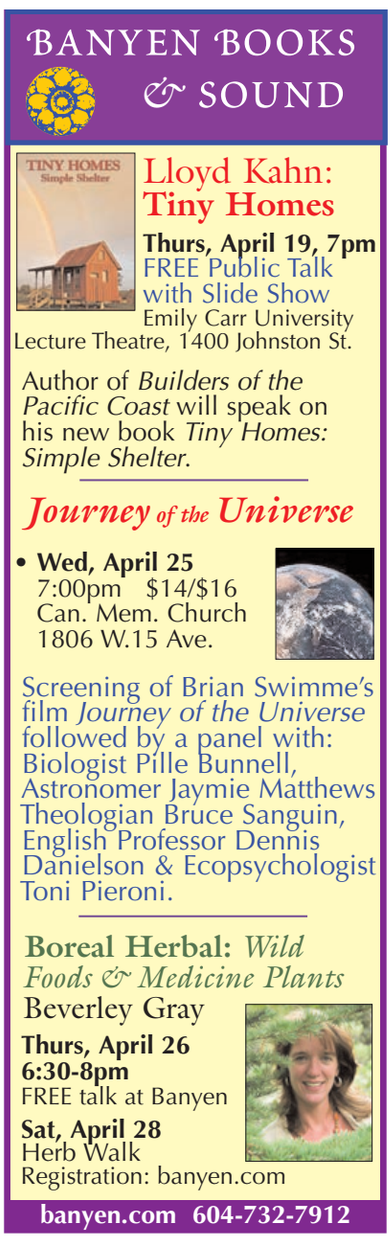
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Emily Carr University
Lecture Theatre, 1400 Johnston St.
Author of Builders of the Pacific Coast will speak on his new book Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter.
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7:00pm $14/$16
Can. Mem. Church
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Screening of Brian Swimme's film Journey of the Universe followed by a panel with: Biologist Pille Bunnell, Astronomer Jaymie Matthews Theologian Bruce Sanguin, English Professor Dennis Danielson & Ecopsychologist Toni Pieroni.
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Deanne Berman

Seva Canada turns 30

Seva® Canada, an international eye care charity based in Vancouver, turns 30 this month. Since 1982, Seva Canada has restored sight and prevented blindness in the developing world. To date, Seva and its partners have given the power of sight to three million people in Tibet, Nepal, India, Guatemala, Egypt, Cambodia, Malawi, Madagascar and Tanzania. But what makes Seva different is its unique approach to international development; it empowers the people and communities where it works.

One of the few successful international development organizations, rather than provide relief, Seva supports development. When a crisis occurs in a low to middle income country, whether it is a famine or a natural disaster, many organizations rush to the area. No doubt, suffering is reduced, but the impact ends with the emergency. Seva, in contrast, is among the organizations that work in these countries before, during and after a crisis occurs. Success for Seva is when foreign intervention is not needed at all.

Other organizations coordinate medical missions, short-term stints by physicians or rotations abroad by students or residents. The physicians feel good about providing direct care to patients and improving their lives. The community continues to benefit as long as the foreign physicians are there. There is a short-term advantage to everyone with a medical mission – patients are treated, medical supplies are delivered and there is a sense of accomplishment. However, medical missions can also have negative ramifications as they do not provide an effective plan for the improvement of communities and can actually hamper long-term development and create a reliance on charities and aid resources. The missions can reduce the incentive for those communities to build their own healthcare structures and not rely on outside assistance. While medical missions make sense in emergency situations as they can provide immediate relief and also help in the education of healthcare professionals from the developed world, they can also have a negative impact.

Seva eye screening clinic at a school in the Gulmi District of Nepal. Photo © Ellen Crystal, www.merit2.com

Seva, however, focuses on development and achieving long-term change with the intent of improving the lives of people in communities, now and in the future. It involves much planning, coordination with local partners and ongoing research. With development, the goal is to build local capacity and sustainability and the work continues even after Seva is no longer involved.

Seva believes in creating local, sustainable programs that aim to reduce the dependence on outside assistance and that are culturally sensitive and available to everyone. Seva works with international partners including local organizations, community leaders and government to determine the needs of an area. Seva then lends support through planning and launching programs, training local doctors and community outreach personnel and providing technology and supplies – always with the end goal that the community will become financially self-sustaining.

Seva's innovative sustainability model of enabling communities to care for their own through the transfer of knowledge and support means that when someone donates $1 to a program, its value is actually much greater. Imagine planting a seed. The seed grows into a tree that then seeds other trees and then a forest, all from the same $1 donation. That $1 helps provide eye care in the present and in the future; it keeps on working for the individual and the community.

Deanne Berman is the marketing and communications director at Seva Canada.

Beyond the Darkness exhibit honours Seva's work

Celebrate Seva Canada's 30 years of restoring sight and preventing blindness in the developing world at *Beyond the Darkness*, a photo exhibition by the international, award winning photographer Larry Louie.

Exhibition: April 23-May 12, HSBC Pendulum Gallery, 885 West Georgia Street. **Donor Reception:** Thurs April 26, 6-8 pm. RSVP to admin@seva.ca. For more info about Seva, visit seva.ca or call Deanne Berman, 604-713-6622, communications@seva.ca

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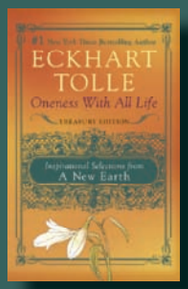

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SEVA canada 30 years

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Tour Dates

April 15	Camrose, AB	Chuck MacLean Arts Centre
April 16	Drayton Valley, AB	Yoga for You
April 17	Calgary, AB	Parkdale United Church
April 20	Golden, BC	St Andrew's United Church & Centre for Peace
April 22	Kelowna, BC	Summerhill Pyramid Winery
April 24	Squamish, BC	The Space
April 26	Vancouver, BC	HSBC Pendulum Gallery
April 28	Parksville, BC	The Alchemists Circle
April 29	Nanamio, BC	Unity Church of Nanaimo
May 1	Campbell River, BC	Ocean Resort, Wellness Centre & Spa
May 2	Quadra Island, BC	Quadra Island Community Centre
May 3	Parksville, BC	Alchemists Circle
May 4 & 5	Victoria, BC	Church of Truth
May 6	Mayne Island, BC	Mayne Island Community Centre
May 7	Salt Spring Island, BC	The Salt Spring Centre of Yoga
May 10	Whistler, BC	The Brew Creek Centre
May 12	Vancouver, BC	St. Mark's Anglican Church
May 14	Chilliwack, BC	St. Thomas' Anglican Church
May 16	Abbotsford, BC	Edenvale Retreat Center
May 18	Nelson, BC	Shanti Yoga Studio
May 19	Silverton, BC	Silverton Gallery
May 21	Canmore, AB	Sacred Roots Yoga
May 24	Bragg Creek, AB	Yoga Within The Heart Studio
May 25	Calgary, AB	Inglewood Community Hall
May 26	Edmonton, AB	Westmount Fitness Club
May 27	New Norway, AB	The Willows Rustic Retreat Center

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